

# RESEARCH SUMMARY

## Healthy Rural Communities

### Strategies and Models of Practice

A practical guide for rural municipalities to create healthier, more vibrant and sustainable communities through planning, collaboration and action.



### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Healthy Rural Communities project identified evidence-informed strategies and models of practice for land use planning, policies, procedures and community design that improve population health outcomes in rural Ontario.

Funded by Public Health Ontario through the Locally Driven Collaborative Projects program, the project was a partnership between the University of Guelph and several Ontario Public Health Units with a rural focus.



### WHO WAS INVOLVED

- Municipal partners, planners, public health professionals, and community leaders
- University of Guelph (Project Director: Dr. Wayne Caldwell)
- Advisory Committee from Public Health and Municipal Organizations



### KEY DELIVERABLES

- Healthy Rural Communities Tool Kit – A Guide for Rural Municipalities
- 13 Action Areas with practical strategies
- Municipal Checklist linking planning, health and economic development
- Case studies and innovative examples
- Workshop presentations and materials
- Videos and knowledge mobilization tools



### PROVINCIAL WORKSHOPS

A series of workshops were delivered across Ontario with funding provided through an OMAFRA–University of Guelph partnership. Workshops engaged municipal staff, elected officials, planners, public health professionals and community partners in applying the Toolkit to local contexts.



### KEY THEMES

- ✓ Land use planning and the built environment
- ✓ Active transportation
- ✓ Access to local, healthy food
- ✓ Affordable housing
- ✓ Community engagement and partnerships
- ✓ Infrastructure and environmental stewardship
- ✓ Economic development and sustainability
- ✓ Social inclusion and well-being



### IMPACT

The Toolkit and workshops equip rural municipalities with the knowledge, tools and resources to make informed decisions that strengthen community sustainability and improve health outcomes—today and for future generations.

**13 ACTION AREAS.  
10 KEY THINGS TO DO.**



### FUNDING

Toolkit: Funded by Public Health Ontario

Workshops: Funded through OMAFRA partnership with the University of Guelph



### PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

Bringing together public health, planning, engineering, municipalities, academics and communities across Ontario to build stronger, healthier and more resilient rural places.



### FURTHER INFORMATION

The Toolkit, videos, workshop resources and additional project materials are available at:

[waynecaldwell.ca/healthyruralcommunities](http://waynecaldwell.ca/healthyruralcommunities)

### TOOLKIT AUTHORSHIP

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